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Patty Miley
Jane O'Connor
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Stirring

By Karen McAllister

I stood alone
As the river ran through
And free
I danced in circles
As the butterflies
Circled me
And when the wind blew
I froze to see
What I could breathe
And what I could be

Still I was there
When the sun melted
Into the sea
When moonlight splashed the dock
As the house flies
Swarmed like bees
Motionless I stood
Intrigued to see
If it was you
Stirring in the trees

Out of the Shadows

By Jane Yannetti

"Mage, quit it!" Isabel DeWinter tightened her grip on the reins, trying to still the frightened horse's frantic movements. Shadow Mage shook his head from side to side, his grey coat lathered with nervous sweat and slicked with falling rain.

The storm had come up so suddenly, angry storm clouds rolling in unannounced to chase the sun away. As the sky darkened and the wind began to make its presence felt, Mage had grown more and more difficult to handle. Isabel tried to hide her own growing agitation. *Just my luck to be five miles from the barn on a storm-shy horse*, she mused. She ran a soothing hand down Mage's neck, feeling the animal's muscles tremble in his nervousness. "Steady, sweet boy. We'll be home soon." She could barely hear herself over the cry of the wind.

She had risen early that morning, loath to let a chance to ride the cross-country course at the old Lockwood estate go to waste. It was so seldom that the spacious grounds of Woods' Glen were opened for public use since the death of old Mr. Lockwood two summers before. It was only through the machinations of a friend at work that she was allowed on the grounds in the first place. She had yet to figure out how he'd done it; what happened at the estate was a mystery these days. Some said the old manor house stood empty now. Others said an oft-whispered-about but never-seen son of the old man now lived up on the hill, but, in truth, none could vouch for ever having seen him. Still, at night, on occasion, the trumpeting whinny of a stallion seemed to soar across the breeze from Woods' Glen, finding for accompaniment only the clear strident tones of a dog.

Isabel had spent a blissful hour working Shadow Mage before the weather had begun to turn. Walking a fine line between haste and stupidity, she'd turned the horse for home, trying to curtail his natural instinct to run as fast as his legs could take him from the danger he sensed.

"Easy," she murmured again as Mage shied nervously

across the trail. Clumsy with fear, the great horse stumbled on the path, one hoof clattering against a random stone. Lightning lit the sky seconds before a peal of thunder roared. Shadow Mage reared, his forelegs pawing frantically at the air. He bolted forward, heedless of Isabel's attempts to slow him. Branches clawed, whiplike, at his hide, spurring him on with their brutal fingers. Heedless of direction, the frightened animal stumbled through the bracken, his legs pistoning as he fought to remain upright. Truly scared now, Isabel fought to keep Mage's head up. The panicked horse stumbled one final time, falling to the rain-drenched earth with a sickening thud, and Isabel knew no more.

The first sensation Isabel could rightly remember was that of cool, soothing cloth sweeping across her face. Moaning softly at the ache in head and shoulder, she forced open sleep-gummed eyes that didn't want to focus. She caught sight of a slender pair of hands and a shadowed face before she gave into exhaustion once more, falling asleep to the sound of water spattering into a bowl.

When next she woke, it was to bright sunlight streaming through ornately curtained windows. Her head felt remarkably better, though her shoulder still pained her. Stately maple trees and the hint of lush pastureland teased her eyes as she glanced outside before the soft tap of boot heels on wood alerted her to the presence of another.

He might have been hauntingly beautiful once, standing there in well-cut riding breeches, polo shirt hugging his broad shoulders and muscled chest. Green eyes flecked with gold gazed at her somberly as he set a small tray on the bedside table. Those eyes might have been enough to cast a spell on anyone's heart were it not for the heavy band of scar tissue that marred one side of his face, tracing a spidery furrow across the planes of his cheek and the bridge of his nose, obliterating the better part of one eyebrow. Despite her better intentions, Isabel turned her gaze away, running a hand through her long black hair to hide her nervousness.

"I found you on the trail and brought you here," the stranger said, the timbre of his voice resonating through the confines of the room. "You were hurt, and your horse needed care as well."

Mention of Shadow Mage gave her the courage to look the man full in the face, and he turned his head away, toward the window, so that he was only seen in that one, flawless profile. "Is he okay?" she asked.

"He's scraped up some, and he's not too happy about being in the same barn as my stud, but he'll be fine. I've put betadine on the worst of the cuts; he'll be fit to go before your shoulder's strong enough to hold him."

"Thank you..." she paused. "I...I don't even have a name for you."

"Not many do, Isabel," he replied, in a voice so soft she barely caught it. "My name is Tristan. I live here at Woods' Glen."

He kept his face averted, and she frowned. "How...how did you know my name?" she asked, taken aback.

"It's engraved into the plate on the cantle of Mage's saddle," he answered. "And yes, that's how I know his name, too." He turned to face her fully, a small smile raising his ruined cheek. "Now, if you feel up to it, I've brought some food for you." He indicated the small tray he'd set on the nightstand. "Is there anyone I should call for you, let them know where you are?"

She shook her head. "Thanks, but no. My housemate's at a dog show for the weekend, so no one's expecting me back until tomorrow."

"Eat, if you feel up to it, and I'll be in to check on you later. I need to get things settled in the barn." His gold-flecked eyes were very bright before he turned away, closing the door softly behind him.

Poor man, Isabel thought to herself as she plucked an apple off the waiting tray. *Waking up every morning to a face that looks like that*. And he'd been so nice to her. Eyelids growing heavy with exhaustion, she finished the apple and drifted off to sleep once more.

Evening was casting its shadows across the sky, painting it in brilliant shades of rose and flame, when Isabel next awoke. Stretching, still a little tired, she winced at the pull of muscles in her sore shoulder. Shrugging it off as something of little importance, she rose from the silken sheets of the bed. Surprise furrowed her brow as little details she'd been too out of sorts to note before crept upon her consciousness. Her damp and muddy riding clothes were gone; in their place was a long cotton t-shirt and a soft pair of sweat pants much too large for her own slender frame. Embarrassment tinged her cheeks a slight pink as it came to her how she must have come to wear these clothes. *Ah, well I suppose having a stranger undress me is better than staying in soaked clothes for hours on end.* She saw her boots sitting at the foot of the bed, free of mud and grime, a set of boot hooks on the floor beside them. Gratefully, she pulled them on, running her hands fondly over the supple, pliant leather. Feeling somewhat more herself, she walked from the room. It was long past time to see how Shadow Mage was doing.

The soft baritone sound of humming greeted her as she walked into the large horse barn. Taking a moment to savor the scents of hay and sweet feed, she followed the sound to the tack room. She paused in the doorway, softly calling out to Tistan as he methodically cleaned the mud from a saddle she recognized for her own.

"Hey, you didn't need to do that for me," she admonished, falling silent as she saw him startle. He turned toward her for a bare moment, then turned his face from view just as quickly. She caught sight of something in his eyes, something akin to fear; or was it wistfulness?

He shrugged. "It's no trouble," he said, as he rubbed some neat's foot oil into the saddle, bringing it up to a soft shine before he took it from the cleaning rack and set it on the saddletree.

"You'll be wanting to check in on your horse, I gather?"

"Please," she said, seeing in her mind's eye the flash of lightening, feeling once more the sickening sensation of a falling horse.

"He's right back here." Tristan self-consciously brushed at

his scar with one hand, leading Isabel into the light and airy barn. As they walked down the aisle, a chestnut horse whickered, popping his fine, sculpted head over the stall door. Tristan stopped to stroke his neck, murmuring soft nonsense to him.

"He's lovely," Isabel murmured, and the stallion turned toward the sound of her voice.

"This is Narya," he said, as he stroked the animal's shining golden coat. "Probably wondering where his dinner is. We'll go check on your Mage and then feed them both."

It was then that Isabel noticed that all of the stalls in the large barn were empty, save two. Tristan saw her confusion and hastened to explain, his voice stumbling a little. "When Father died, I sold most of the stock, save Narya, and sent the boarders away. It's just me here, now, though I hire groundskeepers and the like, people I can avoid. I won't have more animals than I can care for." His brilliant eyes reflected a loneliness that tore at Isabel's heart.

Growing bold, she opened her mouth to question him further, but Shadow Mage's welcoming whicker stopped her from comment.

"Mage!" She covered the remaining distance between them, wrapping her good arm around his satin grey neck. He snorted softly in response, his warm breath brushing her neck as he gently lipped her hair. Isabel held him close for a moment then took a step back, running a critical eye over him. Betadine solution painted bright green lines across his neck and flanks, standing in stark contrast to the white hair, but none of the lacerations looked overly serious. The horse's eyes were bright, his legs clean and cool to the touch when she slipped under the stall-guard to check them. Overall, he appeared little the worse for wear. "He looks fantastic. I can't thank you enough." Even as she spoke, she couldn't help but notice how Tristan hung back, keeping to the shadows of the stable. The better to hide, she supposed.

"No thanks needed. He's a good horse, and you needed help." With that, he began walking back down the aisle. Back still turned, his resonant voice floated behind him as Isabel left

the stall. "What do you feed him?"

"He gets one scoop of trotter, one half charger," Isabel replied automatically, her thoughts still tuned to this mysterious stranger. She missed the rattle of feed being emptied into Narya's manger, startling as Tristan appeared behind her once more.

"Here you go," he said, his smile tentative and shy. "Give that to him while I go grab the first aid kit. I want to clean those cuts once more, just in case. He got them pretty muddy when he fell." And with that, he was gone.

Isabel stood for long moments, listening to the comforting sound of equine teeth contentedly crunching grain. No sooner had Mage finished bolting his feed than Tristan returned, handing her a halter and lead shank and nodding toward the aisle.

Understanding the implicit request, Isabel entered the stall, murmuring quietly to Shadow Mage as she haltered him and threaded the stud chain around his muzzle.

She led him out into the aisle, eying Tristan questioningly. "Do you want him cross-tied or just held?"

Tristan rubbed his chin in thought, fingers occasionally ghosting across the edge of his scar. "He wasn't too skittish when I treated him this afternoon, and he has you here now. He should be fine just being held, but keep a good grip on that shank."

She nodded quickly, holding the lead shank tightly, at the base of the halter where she would have the most control. Most of her attention focused on her horse, she nonetheless watched Tristan out of the corner of her eye. He worked quickly and efficiently, gently cleansing Mage's cuts with a sterile cloth and applying betadine neatly over each wound. Mage barely flinched under those strong, slender hands, and Isabel felt something stir in the vicinity of her heart. Tristan seemed not to notice her preoccupation, caught up in his task. He murmured to Mage in that deep, clear voice of his, a soothing litany of nonsense that did as much to sooth Isabel's nerves as it did her horse.

Finally, Tristan wiped his hands on a spare towel, giving Mage an affectionate pat on the shoulder. "He can go back in now. He should be fine." The confidence that flowed from him when he was bent on a task seemed to desert him then, and he

looked away, his voice growing softer, less sure. "I don't think he should be hacked home tonight, and, anyway, it's a bit too dark for you to ride back now. You both...you both are welcome to spend the night. Your shoulder should be a bit better by then as well."

Isabel nodded, a little dazed. "I don't know how to thank you," she said quietly, as she brought Shadow Mage back into the stall and clipped the stall-guard back into place. He raised a hand to forestall any more words, shaking his head in amusement. "Remember?" he asked, a smile tugging at his lips. "No thanks needed."

An answering smile quirked at her own lips, and she acted on impulse. "I know this great restaurant in Lancaster. Let me take you out to dinner," she said, looking up at him, his gentle hands and sad smile flitting across her memory.

Tristan flinched back in shock, dropping the first aid kit. His throat worked, but no sound came out, and he picked the kit up with trembling hands. Gripping it tightly, he looked about as if searching for some route of escape, his breath coming in hitching gasps.

"Breathe, Tristan!" she commanded firmly, her tone brooking no argument. She took his hand in hers, gently stroking the knuckles as she murmured soothing nonsense words. Gradually, the frightened man's frantic breathing slowed, and he began to regain his composure. Isabel took a deep breath of her own, reaching out to stroke Tristan's arm. "I'm sorry. Maybe I was too forward."

He shook his head, the panic beginning to leave his face. "Not your fault," he said with a voice that shook. "I...I don't really deal well with the idea of leaving the grounds." He appeared in control of himself once more, but his eyes beseeched her for understanding. Turning away, he stared off into the distance, the silence stretching thick and oppressive between them. His voice, when he spoke, was so soft that Isabel almost missed it. "I haven't been off of this estate since..." He trailed off, unable to continue, his hand drifting up to cover his scar.

Heart welling with sympathy, Isabel took his hand again,

leading him to a bench down the aisle. He sat gratefully, and she perched beside him, lacing his fingers with her own. Surprised at her own forwardness, but unable to deny the connection she felt arcing between them, she waited patiently for Tristan to speak.

"It was six years ago last May," he began. "I was doing my internship placement after medical school." A melancholy look came into his eyes, lost and very far away. "You know how sometimes, things are so good that you get so goddamn sure of yourself? You don't think anything can go wrong? And maybe you aren't as careful as you should be..." He swallowed hard, his body tight with tension. "That's what I was like, so cocksure I could do no wrong." Tristan's face went impossibly paler. "I got careless. I didn't pay attention, and I gave someone the wrong antibiotic. She was...she was allergic to penicillin. Her uncle brought her in for strep. He never said anything about allergies, but I should have asked...I was supposed to ask!" He lowered his head, continuing in a voice no softer than a whisper. "By the time she was brought back in, there was nothing we could do." He ran a trembling hand through his hair. "She was so young, just a kid, really. And she trusted me to take care of her." A single tear weaved a trail of silver down his cheek. "I lost it when she was pronounced dead. I couldn't believe it. All I wanted to do was get away. Any fool could have seen I wasn't fit to get behind the wheel, but all I wanted was to leave everything behind." He looked her full in the face, shame shining from his own. "I skidded on some wet leaves coming into Woods' Glen. There wasn't too much damage to the car...just enough to leave me with a concussion, and with this." His free hand touched his scar. "Glass from the windshield. I was lucky not to lose my eye."

He's a doctor... Isabel's thoughts swirled inside her head. So that's why he felt he could take care of me when I fell. My God, the pain he's in...

"I was pretty out of it for the next few days. My father's physician patched up my cheek as best he could, and Father managed to use his influence to quiet the scandal at the hospital. I wasn't coherent enough to tell him that I deserved any punishment they would give me. I wish I could have. Maybe..." He

shrugged his broad shoulders. "I haven't left the grounds since that night."

Isabel could only stare at him, dumbfounded.

"Oh, I've tried to, believe me. But I can't...every time I try to, I just lock up inside. So, I guess I just gave up trying. I'm not really meant to be with other people." He gazed at her sadly. "I forfeited my right to a normal life when I killed that kid."

"Tristan, no!" She raised her free hand to stroke his hair back from his eyes. "You were young. You made a mistake. Does shutting yourself off from the world bring her back? Does keeping this scar change things? Or does it just leave you to repeat your mistakes in your mind over and over again?"

He shook his head regretfully. "I can't face another hospital, again, even to..." Wordlessly, he pointed to the ruin of his cheek. "I wish..."

"You can't wish away the past." She smiled gently. "It's part of who you are. You can't change it any more than you can stop the sun from rising in the morning. All you can do is decide what to make of the time you have left." She moved her hand from his hair, tenderly tracing the furrowed scar. His eyes widened, and fine tremors shuddered his body. "Maybe someday, we can go to that restaurant, one day when you're ready to leave. Maybe we can do that together." Cupping his cheek, she met his gaze once more. "Please? I'd really like to get to know you better."

He looked at her, the wonder in his eye transfixing his ruined face to something of its former beauty. Then, with one last, nervous smile, he rose from the bench, still holding her hand in his, and led her out into the deepening twilight.

**Salvador Dali's 'Philosopher Illuminated
by the Light of the Moon
and the Setting of the Sun'
(The Tragic Constant of the Character)**

By Richard Cullen

To live is to think

A downhearted philosopher
with dark skin covered in dark light

a dark face that cannot be seen
in contemplation
in tattered shreds of clothes
in a twilight terrain

man's best friend seated to his side
wide-eyed

A tongue of confusion
and companionship
hangs
wondering what he is pondering

this desolate
deserted man
sprawled out on the ground

He is immense
in the ominous change that is about to occur

Dark moon
the egg-shaped figure
The birth of change can be seen in this moon
It could be crashing down in the ruins that already exist

for the end

This is the tragic constant of the character
One must not lose desires

I Do

By Ilene Correia

You say the word *yes*
like it means nothing
hollowed out and sitting
inside your lonely heart
Yes, of course I do
once again said without meaning
Do you know what it's like
to be me? To want
everything and nothing?
Say yes. Take my body
from my heart. Lie
baby. But only if it
makes you feel right. Yes
I know what's going on. Yes
I want it too. Yes, of course
I do

The Mirror

By Patty Miley

*The judges have awarded "The Mirror" a special commendation
for excellence in creative writing.*

Alone, in front of the Mirror, she cries,
her eyes forever shrouded, masking what is real.
She stares into the Mirror with her self-deceiving eyes.
She traces her fingers along the bones,
only seeing the thick skin that was once there.

Remembering those painful days,
she perpetually strips away each heavy layer of herself,
constantly starving for just a glimpse of reality,
always hidden by her past.

She breathes in deep, her hands upon the hollow cage she created.
She closes her eyes, desperately grasping to feel who she is now,
controlled by what she was.

As she focuses on the Mirror,
deception reflects, the truth forever lost in layers of self-loathing.
As the blinding shame floods over her,
she realizes she will never see past those layers.

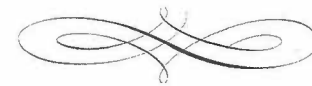
Burning her eyes,
the tears slide
down.
Down
the tears slide,
burning my eyes.

I realize I will never see past these layers
as the blinding shame floods over me.
The truth forever lost in layers of self-loathing, deception reflects
as I focus on the Mirror.

Controlled by what I was,
desperately grasping to feel who I am now, I close my eyes.
My hands upon the hollow cage I created, I breathe in deep.

Always hidden by my past,
constantly starving for just a glimpse of reality,
I perpetually strip away each heavy layer of myself,
remembering those painful days.

Only seeing the thick skin that was once here,
I trace my fingers along the bones.
With my self-deceiving eyes, I stare into the Mirror.
Masking what is real, my eyes shrouded forever,
I cry alone in front of the Mirror.



Twenty-Minute High

By Ariel Diamond

"Twenty-Minute High" was a prize-winning entry in Curry's First-Year Essay Competition.

My achievement is very unique and some might say not an achievement at all. But I feel that I helped change two people's lives, one of which was my own. I now see from my experience that you do not have to be a super human to achieve a goal. I set out to help someone and did it to the best of my ability. Therefore, my greatest achievement is saving my boyfriend's life.

I never thought that a combination of a mirror, a razor, and a small line could affect your life. I used to believe if you tried something once, your curiosity would disappear. It goes along with the saying, "Curiosity killed the cat." I learned the hard way that an addiction does not just heal or go away with a simple solution.

From as early as my freshman year, I knew the effect of cocaine on a person's life. Being a person that is so against drug use, having a serious involvement with a guy that was addicted to cocaine and into heavy drug use made me a well-educated fool. There should be a surgeon general's warning with every vial of coke sold; it should read: "This product alters your mind, but affects the life of everyone around you."

Living a life that resembled a bad made-for-TV movie was not my idea of fun. But being part of Rob's life came along with numerous statistics and numbers that just equaled a lifetime movie. I became seriously involved with Rob by the end of my freshman year. As time passed, Rob was emotionally withdrawn and never mentally there. When someone would speak to him about anything, even the weather, he would say, "Yea, yea, right. Gotcha." I remember it like it was yesterday.

Winter break was coming up, and Rob was distancing himself from me and from his family. We were both leaving on the same day for vacation; I was going to Mexico and he was going to Aruba. We were going to be apart for sixteen days, and I had a strange feeling that, without me by his side, he would get

himself into a situation he could not handle. Sure enough, the night before we were leaving, I waited for Rob to come say good-bye. All night I sat by the door. He didn't pick up his phone when I called him a million times, so I knew something was wrong. The next morning I had to get on the plane without saying goodbye to him. When I arrived in Mexico, I had a message from his parents. They told me Rob was in the hospital because he blew about ten lines of coke the night before. Somehow he managed to drive home and collapsed face down in the snow right in front of his house. They found him, called 911, and rushed him to the hospital.

After all was said and done, the doctors told Rob's parents that Rob had overdosed on Freebase cocaine. Freebase cocaine is 80 to 90 percent pure. The solution Rob's doctor and his parents came up with was to keep Rob hospitalized so that he would be able to go into a detox program. They hoped he would slowly recover within a few months. The doctor told Rob that he had destroyed the tissue in his nose, killed thousands of brain cells, and that there were long- and short-term effects from this addiction.

That night I flew home from Mexico by myself and went to the hospital. I had so many emotions running through me, and I didn't know how to react to the situation. When I got to the hospital, I tried to compose myself and be strong for Rob and his parents. The second I saw him so pale, skinny, and lifeless lying in that bed, I began to cry. For a minute, I selfishly thought of how Rob and I had perfectly planned our life together, from college to marriage: this did not fit in the game plan. I worried how our relationship would suffer from his huge mistake.

After the initial shock of this surreal situation, I decided not to feed into the problem but to be a help. I went to the library and took out books on cocaine, rehab, and overdosing. There was a lot of information I didn't know about cocaine, and never really understood, until I read up on this horrendous drug. I would sit with Rob while he lay there so depressed and read these books. There was a chapter on the physical effects of cocaine that said that a person abusing the drug for a long period of time might have symptoms such as increased heart rate, blood pressure, body

temperature, and speed of respiration. The book also stated that physiological effects could sometimes be more overbearing in the beginning of cocaine abuse. It said that the psychological signs of cocaine abuse were increased alertness, wakefulness, mood swings, a belief that athletic performance would increase, insomnia, disorganized behavior, irritability, and hallucinations.

Three months after the grueling process of trying to get Rob through his detox and rehab, I decided I needed a break from him; I could not bear to be with him anymore. I stuck it out until Rob got out of the hospital two days before our two-and-a-half year anniversary. We made plans for the night of our anniversary to mark our years together and to celebrate him being clean. On March 25th, I drove over to his house to find him passed out on his bathroom floor with a bloody nose. I called the hospital and rode there with him. I saw where my life was heading if I chose to stay with him, so when he woke up the next day in the hospital, I ended things right then and there.

I learned lessons from the whole Rob-experience that some people don't learn until they are halfway through their lives. Rob's addiction made me grow up a lot faster and made me a lot more aware of the drug world in teenage life. Rob was addicted to cocaine; I was addicted to Rob. The whole situation made me emotionally distraught.

My experience was unique and overwhelming at times, but I will say this: from learning firsthand all the horror that comes along with the abuse of cocaine, I will never ever be tempted to experiment with a drug like that. Cocaine is a powerful stimulant that creates a high for twenty minutes and a life filled with pain.

To an Ex-boyfriend

By Patty Miley

I have no idea what made you write that letter,
but it really got to me,

that *apology* pulled from somewhere
better left unsaid,
sugarcoated with your delusions.

You seem to have forgotten about those nights long ago,
laced with Ecstasy and blood, intoxicated
with fear and screwdrivers,

each yet another fragile piece for your menagerie,
shattered by my faults
and your fury.

Perhaps you should have apologized
when you had your hands around my throat,
instead of trying to squeeze an impossible yes
from a gasped no.

I'm still scarred, inside
and out, by constant reminders
of your *love*,
but your delayed attempt at morality
sparked something inside of me
I've never felt . . .
the will
to piece together the broken shards of myself
and survive, beating
you and cleansing myself
of the pain
of shame and regret.

Forgiving myself finally gives me
your power to not care.
I'll never look back.

A Jackass Tale

By Jim Mara

Once upon a time, there was a big farm where a wide variety of animals lived. They gathered there from different places all over the world because they had heard that this farm was famous for the tastiest grass, the softest hay, and only the most beautiful plants. But, once they got to the famed farm, they were highly disappointed. This so-called wonderful place was nothing more than a rundown dump. The grass was dead, the hay was rough, and the plants had been picked and eaten already. The creatures were very displeased, but they tried to make the best of their disheartening situation.

There were all types of animals at the sad farm. Among them, there were four in particular who became close friends. They were a jackass, a pig, a sloth, and a cat. Now this may seem like an unlikely combination of creatures to hang out together, but despite differences in their species, they enjoyed one another's company. Although they were quite diverse, they usually got along as if they were brothers and sisters.

After living on the farm for a few months, the four discovered that every couple of weeks there was a party down by a magical lake. It just so happened that there would be a gathering held on the beach of the lake that upcoming Saturday. None of them had ever been to this supposedly mystical place before, but rumor had it that it contained a special type of water. Drinking the water would give them courage to do amazing things and make them louder and wilder than they normally would be. This news excited the creatures because they were looking for any way to cure their unhappiness.

On the night of the party, everyone was panicking. The cat was racing around, talking to neighboring animals, trying to find out exactly which species would be at the beach that night. She hoped some penguins would be there.

All of the female animals thought the penguins were the dreamiest. They were the most popular creatures on the farm because they always dressed nicely, had classic good looks,

and an ice-cool demeanor. They also carried an aura of cockiness and a waddle in their step, which drove all of the females wild. The penguins' don't-care-about-anything attitude drew their attention away from all of the other male creatures.

The pig was also frantic on the evening of the lake affair. She was extremely self-conscious and felt that she didn't look good enough to go to the beach.

"Do I look ok?" she asked her friends.

"You look wonderful," said the jackass.

"Oh, no I don't. I look fat. I ate too much slop today," sighed the pig. "Did I get all of the filth off of me? Can you see any dirt?"

"I don't see a thing," responded the jackass. "You look beautiful."

The pig ignored his compliment and continued to dip her face in a bucket of water.

Taking a break from socializing, the cat turned her attention to the sloth.

"Are you really going to the party like that?" she complained.

"Sure, why not?" questioned the sloth, as his body reclined horizontally on the ground. "What's wrong with the way that I look?"

"Oh, nothing!" said the cat, as she rolled her eyes. "Once we get to the lake, just don't talk to me."

"Whatever," conceded the sloth. At this state in their friendship, he accepted the cat's occasional snobby behavior.

The cat and the pig weren't paying the slightest bit of attention to the males' conversation. The cat had bought some catnip earlier in the afternoon and was enjoying its rewards. The pig was still preoccupied with her appearance and privately snuck off to a corner of the barn in an attempt to regurgitate excess body weight.

Once eleven o'clock rolled around, the animals were all excited and ready to go. They temporarily put away their individual anxieties and pranced along to the party. The lake wasn't very far, so the odd crew of creature friends arrived to their destination in no time at all.

The gathering was everything that they had hoped. Dozens and dozens of animals as far as their eyes could see. Gorillas, oxen, bears, snakes, minxes, peacocks, hyenas, and other species had all grazed over from their pens and were spread across the beach. Some were familiar faces, but many were new creatures that they had only seen from afar on the farm. This would be their big chance to meet and talk to them.

All of the species in attendance hung out near the lake and would occasionally bend their heads down and take a drink. The sloth and jackass beamed with excitement as they made their way towards the shore. The cat and the pig also inched their way toward the water, but they were more concentrated on socializing with the other animals.

While at the lake, the jackass spotted the annoying rat out of the corner of his eye. Not wanting to be seen, he convinced the sloth to move down to the far edge of the shore where virtually no one was. Once settled and comfortable, the two chums laughed contently as they repeatedly dipped their mouths into the water. Even though they weren't conversing with any new animals, they still were having a great time.

The cat and the pig were enjoying themselves as well. All of the male animals were talking to them and telling them how beautiful they looked. The pig, whose tail was coiled up extra tight, became overwhelmed by the lake water and her newfound adulation. In a lapse of judgment, she was persuaded by a handsome penguin to take a walk with him into the woods.

The cat pranced in circles around all of the admiring male creatures, but paid little mind to their flattery. Her tail swayed excitedly as her attention focused narrowly on one penguin in particular who had briefly made her meow for a couple weeks earlier in the year. Once she had the proper amount of magical liquid in her, she would seize the opportunity and confront him about his abrupt absence from her life.

As the night went on, the jackass would occasionally look for his female friends, but both were nowhere to be found. He was concerned by their sudden departures, but continued to have a fun time with the sloth. The jackass enjoyed telling

stories and acting silly to amuse his friend, while he complacently lay by the riverside.

Around one o'clock, the pig reappeared on the edge of the beach. She was crying softly and sat down next to her male friends.

"What's the matter?" inquired the jackass.

"The penguin I went to the woods with called me a fat swine and said that I didn't know how to waddle properly," sobbed the pig. "He told me I was nothing but common slop."

"Don't listen to him!" snapped the jackass. "You know that you're a great animal."

"No, I'm not," she whined. "I feel dirty."

As the males tried to console the pig, the cat's distinct hissing could be heard nearby. The three animals turned their attention towards the crowd that had gathered around their friend.

"What happened to you?" hissed the cat as her back arched and her fur stood on end. "You just disappeared!"

Her penguin acquaintance just stood silent and flapped his wings apprehensively.

"How could you just pretend we never slid on the ice together?" she yelled while drawing out her claws. "How could you pretend that you don't know me?"

The surrounding animals started to laugh and point at the cat. She was causing quite a scene. Despite her persistent prodding, she wasn't getting any answers from the penguin.

Both the jackass and the sloth were concerned about the females' excessive water intake and emotional instability, but realized that there was no stopping them. Therefore, the male animals continued to enjoy the lake water. They consumed so much magical liquid that they ended up taking a swim in it, giggling all the while.

Before the male chums knew it, the time had reached three o'clock in the morning. Most of the animals had roamed back to the farm, but the males couldn't find the cat or the pig anywhere. They searched up and down the beach desperately looking for their female friends. Unfortunately, the sloth wasn't much help at that point because he had drunk so much

magical liquid that he could no longer stand. The jackass nudged his heavy friend with his nose and summoned him to climb on his back. It was a long, painful walk home, but the two pals made it back to their stables, safe and somewhat sound.

Once the sloth was soundly asleep, the jackass passed by his stall to see if the females had fallen asleep there.

Once the stable was clear, he lay down and fell asleep instantaneously.

The next morning, an ecstatic cat and jubilant pig awakened the jackass. They were glowing because they both had spent their night over in the igloos, which were located outside of the farm.

"How did you get all the way to the igloos?" inquired the jackass.

"We don't know," they answered in unison.

"You don't know?" he quizzed again.

"I don't remember," stated the pig.

"Who cares?" proudly quipped the cat. "We got there, didn't we?"

"Was it a good time?" asked the jackass, concerned and horrified at the females' nonchalance and carelessness.

"It was a blast!" the cat emphatically stated.

"You seem to have your head cocked high this morning," he observed. "Did you make up with your penguin?"

"Yea, did you let him pet your fur?" eagerly inquired the pig. "Did you let him stroke your underbelly?"

"Of course!" exclaimed the cat, as she strutted around the stable. "I was purring all night long!"

Disappointed at his friend's lack of morals, the jackass turned his attention to the pig.

"Did you squeal with a penguin?" he probed inquisitively.

"I don't remember," mumbled the pig nervously.

"You don't remember anything?" scolded the jackass.

"Not really," muttered the pig, with a hint of regret.

"It doesn't matter!" snapped the cat. "We had a great time!"

Feeling reassured, the pig retorted, "Yes, it was fun."

"I hear there's going to be another party on the beach next

week!" excitedly blurted out the cat.

"Yes!" oinked the pig. "I'll have to watch what I eat this week."

The jackass stared with his mouth agape and shook his head with disapproval at the two of them. His head was throbbing from drinking too much lake liquid, and his female friends' account of their nights was not alleviating any of his pain. Too emotionally spent and physically drained to speak, he rolled over and went back to sleep, pondering why "his" species was synonymous with stupid behavior.



College Manifesto

By Maryam Touray

I loathe those with that high school mentality
Who long for popular vitality.
They are blind to reality,
Because we're earning a higher learning
And should be yearning for the door
With the info behind it.
When we find it,
We will hold it and mold it
Into a future better than before.

Now we're here, and we hurt the ones that matter
Because we're trying to climb the ladder
Just to party someplace "phatter."

She says,
*I lie awake and pet your snake.
Your pleased eyes never hesitate
To fulfill the fantasies I ease to you.
You please me, too.
My cup of love is overfilled
With your mere presence
Forever keeping me thrilled.
For you
I live. For you
I die.
I see through your eyes—
Their beauty makes me cry.
You better my existence.
I cherish our persistence of being
One.*

To her, he makes his big appearance
With no sign of coherence.
He holds her, he steals her, he hurts her
As she lies and complies,
Questioning if he'll desert her.

Compromise our demise as a college manifesto.
Possibly discuss the rest
Over a Starbucks Espresso.

Far from home, collectively alone,
In cells with doorbells
That cast spells of rebellion,
Conscious days and unconscious nights
And even more unconscious weekends
Lead to late morning sleep-ins.
Attending class will depend
On the coercion of a friend,
Even though we spend
Twenty-something thousand.

Recreational narcotics abuse
Holds hands with habitual sex use.
Simply another day, and
This is how we play.

Just compromise our demise as a college manifesto.
Possibly discuss the rest
Over a Starbucks Espresso.

If Jewelers Made Lovers

By Ilene Correia

You'd never break
(and even if you did
I could get someone to fix you
for almost nothing)

If I didn't like you, I could get a full refund
and you'd never turn me green

If jewelers made lovers
I could put you on the nightstand
when I got tired of having you around
and pick you back up again
when I missed your presence

You'd be inexpensive, but not cheap
clingy, but not impossibly so
and I could choose which one I like most

I'd say life would be grand
if only jewelers made lovers

A Smile on a Broken Face

By Chapin Kennett

Today I gave a homeless man a dollar.
In fact, it was three.
He smiled to show his gratefulness
and called me sir for reasons I don't see.

Considering he wasn't four times my age,
it was obvious to see
time wore him down
and the streets beat him unconditionally.

He took on being a homeless man as he lost his identity,
added another face blending amongst the walls of insanity,
an unfortunate soul, wandering through life endlessly.

I have no clue if he'll remember me,
but at least he'll have a meal or get drunk to escape reality.
He doesn't know it, but he gave me something richer than dollars
could ever be,

a smile on a broken face
and the feeling of knowing I helped a man
who could never help me.

Step on a crack and you'll break your mother's back

By Ian Coe

Hey man, y'all want some crack?

I don't want no crack...

It's 2:30 a.m. in southeast Capitol Hill. You're only 12 years old,
and that man behind you

is kinda scary, sitting all up in the shadows.

All I can see is his eyes, eyes the same color as the moon and that
piece of rock

you're trying to sell me in your pocket.

Every day I see them, tossed away souls--

the beggars, choosers, abusers, and losers sprawled over the dirty
cracks in the

piss-stained sidewalks.

Capitol Hill, the nation's capitol,

the filthy rich and the dirty poor,

a neighborhood of human

fiends keeping warm from the cracks in the subway vents

in the District of what? Crack, DC!

I see crack heads, crack whores, a crack mayor, cracks in floors,

cracks in the nation, and cracks in our American way of life.

Crack babies slip through and get lost,

Tossed to the curb along with paper and plastic recyclables that
all get thrown

In the same trash heap anyway.

Why would I want your crack?

So I can pull out my cash and your man can crack me on the head!

Or maybe let his heat speak and fill me up with lead!

For what?

For the money I don't have?

...Nah, little man, I got enough crack.

Justice

By Michael Ifill

I haven't seen you in a while, Justice.

Where have you been?

Don't you hear me talking to you?

We've all been screaming and yelling your name, Justice.

The mother next door, her daughter was kidnapped.

Didn't you hear the mother pleading for you to arise, Justice?

I mean, is it too much to ask for you

To make a subtle appearance when called upon,

Justice? You remember John's little brother,

Don't you, Justice? Well, he was beat up so bad

He sustained brain damage. The kids that did this to him

Got off because John's little brother

Threw the first punch. Where were you then, Justice?

Can't you hear John crying himself to sleep every night?

You must be a figment of my imagination, Justice,

Because rarely have I witnessed you bear down

When called upon. We are not going to speak about all

The other people you watched suffer. I hope

You can see me clearly from whatever dark

Hellish cave you live in, Justice. I will not

Wait upon your arrival because my good friend

Reality told me not to depend on you.

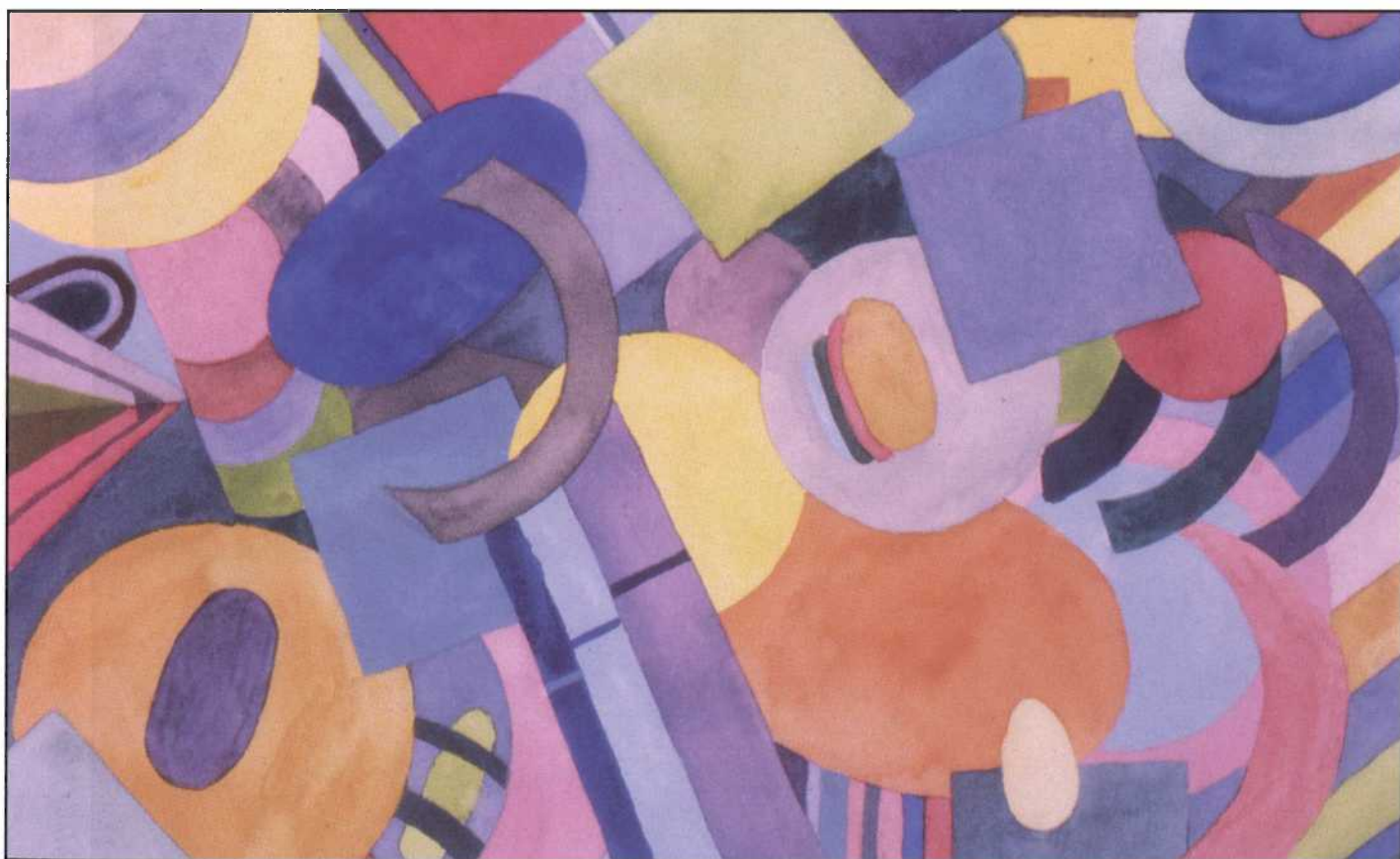
I itch with anticipation of the day when we

Cross paths, my friend or enemy.

As evil as they say you are, I will sacrifice

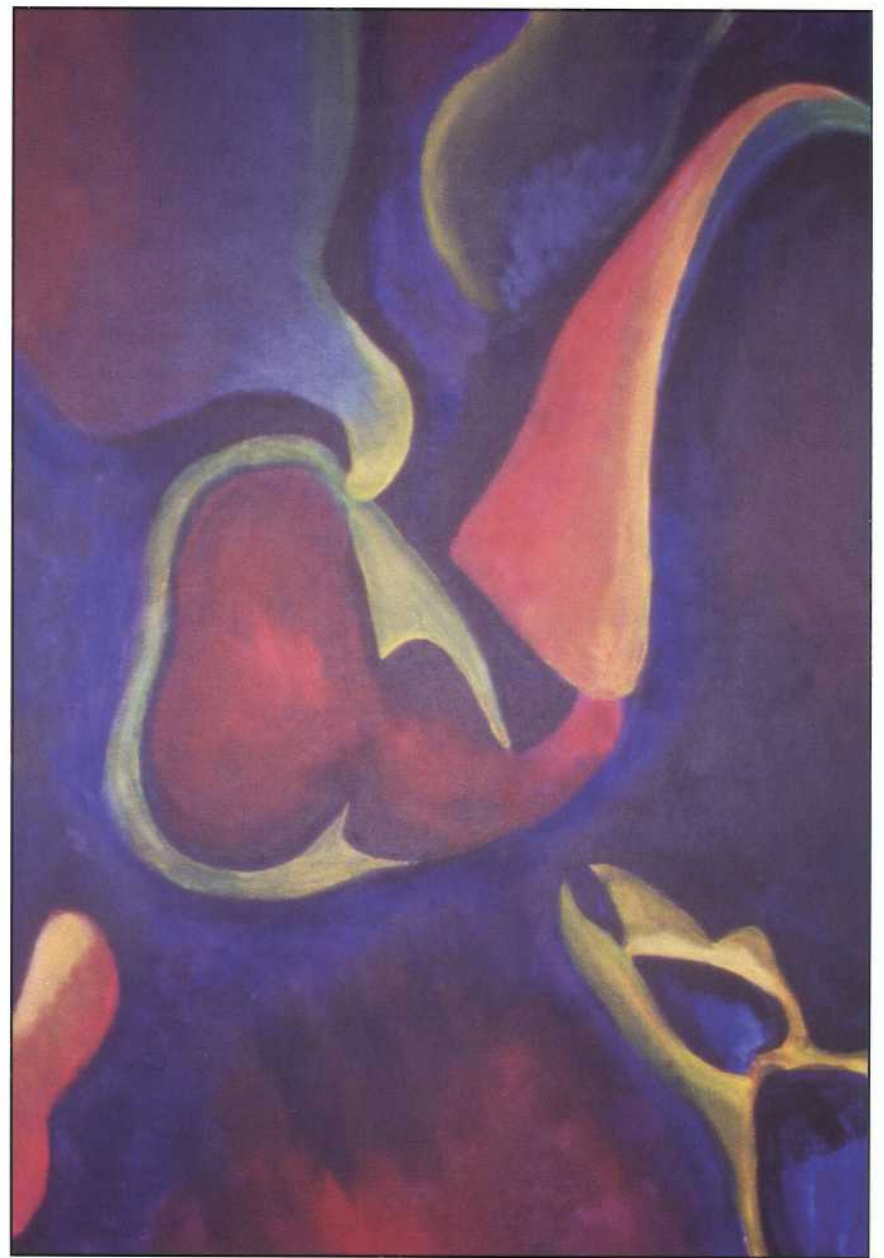
My life for the many that have been unjustly

Punished.





Molly Melone



Deirdre Leonard





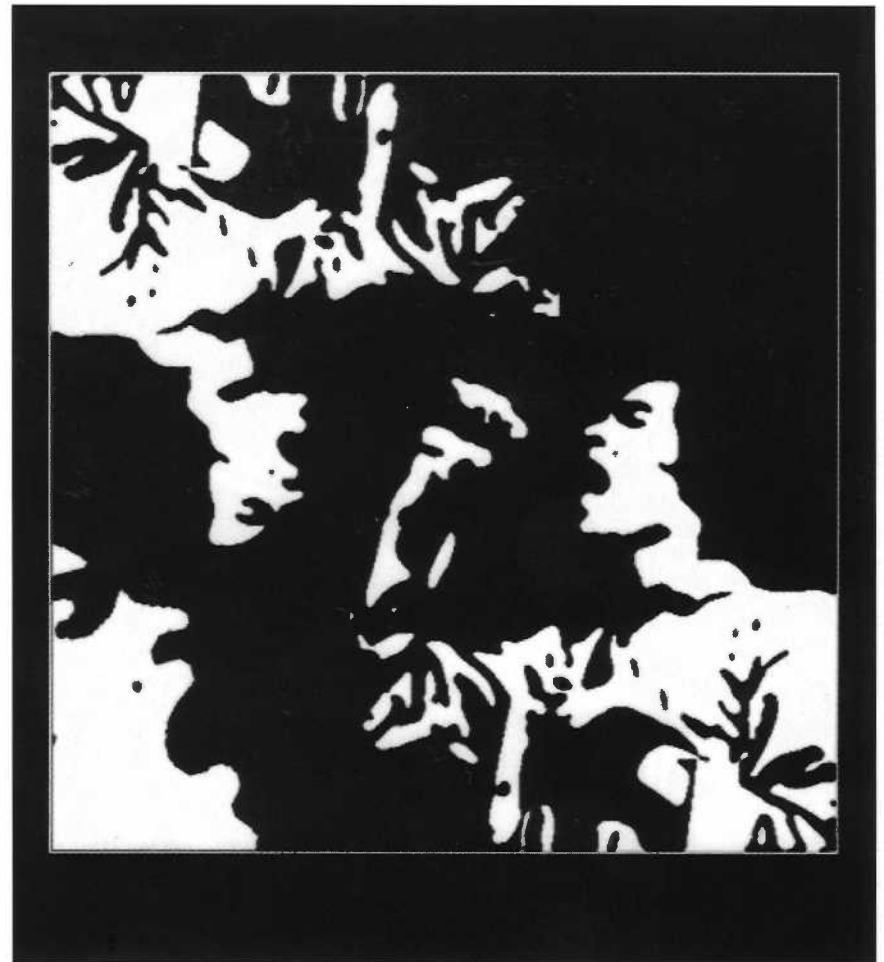
John Mahoney



Melanie DiBenedetto



Lauren Rochon



Lauren Rochon



Brian Winchester





Kristen Jean



Lauren Coleman

Vainglory's Tariff

By Jane Yannetti

They cried that it's the only way
And daunted we gave in.
To be at war's the price we pay
To free the world from sin?

The path to safety's fraught with danger.
Each road brings many fears.
Acting now in haste and anger
They pave the path with tears.

Can't they see it? Don't they know
That more than men can die,
That as they strike the killing blow
Sweet Freedom's death is nigh?

In times when strife and chaos reign
Must hatred's salve be Freedom's bane?

Black Crow

By Brian O'Neil

As I lie looking toward the submissive clouds
I wonder where this evil came from
The black crow swoops by
a dead soul trapped in eternity
flying overhead looking at all the free souls
An unnatural feeling covets my whole being
I feel a strange sensation of being watched
I wonder ...
Do these trapped souls dare to judge us
Do they envy our freedom

The submission of the clouds changes
taking the shape of something evil
lining the world with a charismatic hatred
to be spread like butter across the sky line
As the sun sets in the west
the darkness about to cover the world
is in the form of millions of crows
searching for freedom

Arlington

By Jonathan Reinhart

It must be the flag
draping over his body,
covering the coffin with signs
of embroidered patriotism;

the flag drawn off the casket,
folded with honors in memory
of his life and valorous deeds,
while his wife releases a torrent of tears.

The bugle mournfully sounds retreat,
playing the dreaded Taps,
sending emotion-soaked sounds
into the essence of memory.

The uniform stand at attention:
they aim, they fire, they reload;
they aim, they fire, they reload.
Up into the sky, bullets soar with his soul.

Shadows on White

By Rebecca Sarfati

Dedicated to Michal Nisim

The night's shadows are tall and long, but I do not fear them anymore. It's too cold and too dead out for one to truly be afraid of shadows. No, it's now more the uncomfortable pauses between the two of us before we speak again. There are times I believe that my brother will never speak and will just fade away into the bark of the trees and beyond.

There aren't many of us here, those of us who hide in the forest instead of creep through the streets of the cities. We are too afraid to slide through the towns hoping not to be targeted by big yellow markers sewn to all of our jackets and all of our shirts. Perhaps we are cowards; perhaps we are just better off hiding away. We do not have time to think ourselves righteous or good or sly. We only have time to move and barely enough time to think.

Marda, a girl from my town whom I knew before we fled, came to us last night. I don't remember her mother's name or her father's occupation, and neither does she. Marda came and said she saw shadows in the woods and heard boots crunching in the snow. She moved up towards the front of the woods, where we hide, to talk to us, and she heard them.

I am not one for rumors; I never was, even before. Marda is not one to tell many lies, though. She suspects a raid of the forest any day. I do not doubt her. I am not sure, however, if her fears are founded by shadows in the night.

She informed me that the others were moving that night, just to be sure. I told her I would go in the morning, once Daniel had awakened. She nodded and left. Marda flees so softly in the night that her bare feet do not even make a sound as she bounds across the ice-covered forest floor. Her movements are so soft and so quick that I cannot even distinguish her from the flighty winds through the naked tree branches.

This morning, Daniel and I moved fast through the woods.

The trees are too far spaced out there, though. We ran through the forest with the wind in our faces and the whipping branches at our backs. We paused a moment at a frozen stream. The air is so cold and our clothes are so torn that when we pounded the ice to gather a drink, the last bits of our gloves ripped and stuck to the iced-over brook. We had to disperse those bits; we couldn't have the soldiers find them and realize that there were people in these woods.

Daniel seemed so small as we crouched by the river. He's so very often pale and tired. I let him rest by the stream, with his back to the wind, against a tree trunk. He fell asleep there, with the cold daylight painting across him. I'm sure in my younger days I would have thought it beautiful. It only scares me now.

I let him rest for too long, I think. It just gets so hard at night to watch for threats in the dark or listen to boots crunching for us. Daniel hasn't been sleeping lately. It is really my duty to watch over him, to protect him. I let him sleep today because last night he had stirred so much I couldn't even be sure he slept at all.

By the time the colors on the snow shifted from pale yellows to deep oranges, Daniel had awakened. His dark hair stuck to the tree as he moved away from it and smiled at me, back to reality, but his mind still freed by dreams. I pray for his innocence sometimes. I doubt either one of us will be as free by the end of our endeavors.

The colors are again shifting into black, and we have yet to catch up with the others. Daniel is struggling and being held back by his own sadness. He says he is lost and feels alone. I can only tell him to quiet down as we push through the trees. The population is so sparse, so thin here. It's not easy to breathe with the open space surrounding us. There is no place to put our backs against, and Daniel breathes sedated. I hold him to me for a moment, hushing his fear away. There's a noise.

The two of us crouch in the bushes. The sticks poke into our cheeks and eyes, and the twigs rip at our fingers as we wait uncomfortably. It could be anything from a rabbit to a wolf. We dare not speak, nor move, nor even move our lips to pray it is but a wolf.

I can hear it, though. I can hear the sounds of footsteps in the snow. Many footsteps crunching through the layers. So many

of the others in the forest are so light and weak that their broken shoes and bare feet do not even crack the snow-ice surface. This is no quiet creature of the night used to hunting here. This is a beast of far greater danger, even out of its element.

I tell Daniel we should move. He responds to me with nothing more than a slight whimper. He cannot even muster a nod.

We begin slowly out, trying not to have the branches snap back at us, or the snow scuff the undersides of our feet. Daniel is still slow. I believe now he is slow out of fear of pain and danger. I touch his long and soft hair and smile. Smiles make no noise.

Daniel looks at me so sad and frightened and so alone in his eyes. He trips over a hidden root and hits the ground. We have no time to gasp at the crunch or scramble to our feet before bullets come. Before bullets surround us like black flies or sideways rain. Daniel begins to cry.

I heft him up onto my back and whisper for him to hold on as I head through the protective trunks of wood. Daniel cries and grasps onto my shoulders, our weight so much together that my footsteps are heavy and crash through the snow. My legs are sore, and I'm still tired without sleep, and the bullets are so many now...the cries of soldiers shouting at us echo without any walls to help them.

Wood shatters near us with every spark and angry shot. Daniel's cries are silenced by the roaring sound of shots around us; his grip gets tighter. I fear he is slipping and jump him up further on my back; he wraps his arms around me more. He whimpers, my ripped skirt clutched under his legs.

The shots seem closer, and I cannot hear the soldiers call or cry or shout hurtful things. I can still see the exploding wood and feel the shattering heat and pain of the weight that sinks me closer to the ground.

My breath is so short I want to fall. I adjust Daniel again as he slides more on my back whispering to him that we are almost there, although there is really no "there."

The forest is denser and I twist behind more trees. My heart feels like a burning star waiting to die. The gunshots are so

far off and missing. I heft Daniel up more to keep him holding on as the soldiers' voices become one with the wind.

I run and I run until I feel my heart has burnt itself out, and the night is so quiet now that the forest creatures do not move to disturb it. I heave and lay Daniel against another tree to pause. I need to catch my breath.

Daniel is solemn and sits there. I do not like his eyes. I look at him as I heave and gasp. He is silent and does not whimper. I crouch to him. I ask him if he needs a hug, but he responds with nothing. I take him and hold him, pressing my hands against his warm, wet back. I pull my hands away.

The moonlight is not good for seeing colors. His back is spattered in black. I bring my hands to my face knowing already what I am feeling and smelling. I already know he is dead.

I lean Daniel back up against the tree and I cry. The tears freeze to my face as well as the blood. I know I have to get rid of his body like we got rid of our gloves. I heft him up again and carry him in front of me. I cradle him softly as I take him up a hill, making footholds in the thick snow. I can no longer protect him now. It seems so strange to try to comfort and shush him now. I was supposed to protect him, to keep him sheltered from the looming shadows and stirs in the night. But as I look at him now, it seems as though he was born to protect me.

First Swim

By Ian Foucher

As we round the bend
And leave the protective trees,
We are brought back to Earth.

Although it's warm, it's hardly Spring
We are reminded as we open the throttle
And cool wind dries out freshly healed chapped lips.

The bow of the boat is like a razor blade
Slicing through a blank piece of paper.
The sun's reflection off the water warms us slightly.
The boat slows to a halt.

I feel as if we have disturbed something.
The lake is resting,
Preparing itself for the summer months ahead.
No inner tubes, no screaming children, no kneeboards
or speedboats,

Just stillness and us:
Five brothers who have spent every summer
Together in this water.

We hastily shed our warm clothing,
Joking and reminiscing all the while,
Each of us in a race against the others
To get in the water first.

Interstate-287

By Brad Stio

I will never forget that one cold afternoon in the middle of January. I had just joined the fire department about one month earlier and was a probationary firefighter at the time. We are a volunteer fire department that gets called out to anything ranging from bad car accidents to houses on fire to carbon monoxide and gas leaks. On that day, I smelled, saw, felt and thought things that I will never fully understand for the rest of my life.

Last January, I was eating lunch as usual in our high school cafeteria when I got a fire call for an accident on Interstate-287, a local interstate with three lanes, high-speed traffic and many commuters. I quickly rushed to my truck and then across town to the firehouse. When we pulled onto the scene, we were the second truck there, and it was surprising just how bad this accident was. All we were told was that it was an accident; they never mentioned that it was a fatal car crash that involved a tractor-trailer.

As I jumped off the truck with my fire extinguisher and ax, it wasn't in my mind that I was walking up to a dead person. The nauseating smell caught me first. I will never forget walking away from the car and almost puking. Then I got myself back together because I was there to do a job. I could puke later, so I walked back over to the car to help. As I moved a little closer, I looked into the car, and there he was: a dead man was staring right at me with this stunned look on his face.

I don't even know how to explain the look, mouth wide open and eyes out of his head, a look like, *Oh my God, I am about to die!!!* or maybe, *Quick Brakes!!!* No one will ever really know, but as I walked around the scene, I saw the small things you could pick up on, such as there were no brake marks on the pavement and he had his cell phone in his hand. The State Police had found out that he was actually trying to pass a dump truck on the shoulder and plowed right into the back of a tractor trailer that was illegally parked. Later, the fire department found out that he was not using his cell phone at the time of the accident. We were

all relieved that no one had had to hear the accident, but also very saddened for his family at the same time.

I felt sorrow for this thirty-nine-year-old man with two kids. He had had his whole life ahead of him, but it was all over within an instant because he was rushing to get somewhere. When I went home later that night, I was scared of everything: losing my life, losing someone close to me; the images running through my head were enough to make me get chills up my spine. All through that night and a few to follow, I had nightmares of the scene and would wake up in cold sweats.

This experience changed my life drastically. It changed the way I think about the people around me and how I live my life. I will never be able to fully understand what was going through that man's brain at that split second, or what he felt there on the interstate, but I know that I will never forget those eyes looking at me with a stare that I had never seen before in my life, a look that said, *That's it. It's all over.* I've realized how lucky I am to have a family and friends that care about me, and that I will get to go home to every night. I've learned that life can be given up in an instant, without a trace, and that I should always take care of what I have. I've also learned that I should always keep the respect and love of the people that I care about because, in case there isn't a tomorrow, I want them to know that I love them.



The Pleasure's All Mine

By Jane O'Connor

A man in his car watches
his children play on the beach.
Call me old-fashioned,
but it'd be nicer for those kids
if their father was out there playing with them.
It's too cold out. It's January.
His kids don't feel the cold, not yet.
The dad, though, he's grown up and old.
He just sits in his car and watches them grow.

I see myself out there playing with my kids,
spending time with my loved ones.
That's the only way I want to live.
I know what it's like to grow up
and miss out on having a daddy.

*Pardon me, sir.
Would you step out of your car?
You may want to avoid the risk
of damaging you children's future.
Please pay attention to your kids.
You love them, right?
You love yourself, right?*

It's not about helping this man.
It's about helping myself.
I only use him as an example,
taking a long hard look at the one man
I don't want my kids' father to be.

With my grounded feet,
I will take an active step.
I will open the door of my car,
put my foot on the sand,
and play on the beach with my kids.

A clear sign drives me toward what I truthfully want.
The father I know gets blank stares and empty hugs,
spits out worthless words that are used up and judged.
The father I know gets little attention, and it's a shame.
But he didn't step onto the sand;
he didn't play with his children.

*Thank you, sir.
Your faint smile gives me the chance
to look into an uncomfortable
yet familiar reflection.
I focus my lens
to capture this gut-wrenching image.*

This picture shows me
the one man I don't want.
I see my father and understand a daughter's love,
but fail to see
the one man most worthy of a young woman's love.

Nice to meet you, sir.

Silent Roots

By Karen McAllister

Silently, a plant sips the water.
In Silence
it grows beyond the roots.

Gently, a lover gives way into the moment.
In Gentleness
a lover becomes aware of sensation.

Acceptingly, a partner receives the message.
In Entirety
lovers embrace the roots of one another.

Silently, a love grows within.
In Silence
it creeps up the naked skin.

Directly, the sun lights a plant.
In Directness
warmth merges the love.

Kindly, the emotions travel.
In Kindness
waves flow one to the other.

Nightly, love awakes the fireflies.
In Night
lovers burn in their desires.

Daily, birds awake with harmony.
In Daylight
love's beauty corresponds
in
Silence.

Red Sox Nation

By Jane Yannetti

The outfield grass dances to and fro,
Acquiescing to the sultry summer breeze.
Spring's promise of victory lingers still,
Stirring hope in our small Nation.

Halcyon days, these, when the Olde Towne Team soars.
June lulls, dares to let us scoff at Curses.
Yesterday's heartbreaks hold no power when
The crack of ball on bat says anything
Is possible.

But June's hope gives way to August's rapid stoop.
All-Stars break for more
Than exhibition games.

Fools we are, some say, raging senselessly,
Flinching at the ghosts of '86.
Insane we are, say others,
Holding fast to something not yet come,
Looking toward a day when victory is ours,
When grounders dare not dodge the fielder's glove
And celebration wends its path down Yawkey Way.

We wait.

Our time will come.

Government Hockey

By Nate Taylor

left wing politicians try to steal the puck from the right wings
body checks & balances everybody's fighting
it all started with the tea party that Boston was "Bruin"
now it's the Washington Capitols, I'm trying to figure out what the

PUCK they're doin'
politicians talk about more goals than Wayne Gretzky
but just glide through their terms like they were on jet skis
because these goals turn into broken promises & can't even turn
into a hat trick
war talk's put us on thin ice, let's hope you're not the #1 draft pick
send these Whitewatergate scandals to the box for penalties
but after two and a half minutes these politicians get off free
so my Stanley Cup's half empty at the season's ending
while the government keeps two-line passing bills & amending

Untitled

By Caitlin Haugh

When my friend Melissa said, "Guess what?" I thought it was just another high school rumor that my friends and I would gossip about at lunch the next period. However, it was Tuesday, September 11, 2001, and what Melissa did tell me, in our fourth period study class with the usually-talkative Mr. Howard and the usual cafeteria-smell lingering in the air, was that planes had crashed into the Pentagon in Washington, DC and the Twin Towers in New York.

I did not know what to think. I did not know whether this was one of Melissa's far-fetched "he said/she said" stories or if it were actually true. What I did know was that there was definitely something wrong. As I said, Mr. Howard liked to talk; he also liked to look down on those who walked into his study halls late. I knew that something was wrong when he was not even in the class when I came strolling in ten minutes after the late bell.

Mr. Howard came into the smelly classroom very quietly that morning. He did not say a word. He just turned on the television. It was all over the news: the Towers were burning, and people were jumping to their deaths rather than burning. As my study hall, which was comprised of seniors and seventh- and eighth-graders, sat in disbelief, shock, horror, and even tears, time stood still for me. No one knew what to say. No one spoke. All I could hear was the echo of each television in each classroom down the long second-floor corridor. Each television in each classroom was tuned to the same news station.

Some of us looked out the window at the planes and helicopters flying near our school and feared that an attack on Boston would happen. From my study hall, we had a bird's eye view of downtown. As I watched the news, a million thoughts ran through my mind. My mother works in a hospital and my father works in a jail. Were they next on the lists of attacks? I wondered if I knew anyone who could have been on one of the planes out of Logan Airport. Then the scariest thought crossed my mind.

I thought to myself, "I know a New York firefighter." Alycia, a girl I grew up with, had an uncle named Gerard who had not been hired by the Boston Fire Department. So he went to

New York and became a firefighter in Manhattan. I knew Gerard Dewan well. He had lived with Alycia's family for a few years. He used to play homerun derby on cool summer nights with us kids in my friend's backyard. He used to take us to Castle Island and buy us food from Sully's. Gerard was like a big kid. I knew him in this way before he left for New York. I feared calling Alycia because I felt he was definitely at the Towers helping out.

A few days later, Alycia called me in hysterics to tell me that Gerard was missing. Her parents went to New York. We spoke often about the situation. We both knew that he was dead, but neither of us would say it out loud. Reality was not setting in.

There was a memorial in November to honor Gerard. It was the most beautiful ceremony I had ever seen and will probably ever see. As my parents and I drove to Holy Name Church, we could see it all the way from Bellevue Hill, blocks away. There, in the middle of Centre Street in West Roxbury, Massachusetts, stood two fire trucks with their ladders all the way up in the air in an upside down "v" that displayed a huge American flag. There were so many people outside the church showing support for Gerard and his family. Inside, there were only family, friends, firefighters, police officers, E.M.T.'s, and some local and state representatives, including Mayor Menino. The church portion of the memorial was beautiful. The priest who said the mass was the same one who had buried Gerard's parents. He knew the family well and, like me, he had only good memories of Gerard. As we proceeded outside, it was there that time stood still for the second time in my life.

This time, it was more personal. When I watched the Towers, the Pentagon, and the field in Pennsylvania burn on television on September 11, it was painful for me as an American. As time stood still during Gerard's memorial, it was painful for me as a good friend of the Dewan family. Outside, after the church procession, there was silence as a fireman played "Taps" and an American flag was folded and given to Gerard's only sister. Everyone cried. Time stood still. West Roxbury stood still. I had never seen a funeral or memorial as beautiful and honorable as Gerard's. For me, time stood still on two separate occasions on account of one particular day and for one particular reason: Firefighter Gerard Dewan from 3 Truck Manhattan.

The Last Chocolate Chip Cookie

By Tiana Badolato

When I was younger, my sister Tiffany and I always fought about the last chocolate chip cookie. She would yell at me and say things like, "It's not fair! You always take the last cookie." My instantaneous reply would be, "Finders keepers, losers weepers." We would go back and forth about it until our mother came out and yelled at us. Since Tiffany left for college two years ago, I have had a full container of homemade cookies just lying around and no one to argue with. I have come to find that my companion of so many years is now not around as much as before. It isn't the same without her constantly looking over my shoulder or racing her to the bathroom in the morning before school.

My sister and I are only two years apart. Therefore, while growing up, we did everything together. At times, we even dressed alike and talked alike. When we went to the store with our mother, she would have to buy two of everything, one for Tiffany and one for me; we weren't really into sharing. But the one thing we had to share was the same room. We did this from the time I was six and Tiffany was eight. Then two years ago we found ourselves living in two different cities. I wasn't too fond of this change at first, but I got used to it.

Before, it was as if Tiffany and I were glued together; wherever she was, I was there also. As children, we spent all of our free time in our room, playing in our huge closet filled with Barbies. We sat there for hours just pretending to live the lives of the dolls. Then on the weekends, we both went to the video store with our mom to rent a movie, and we brought it to our grandmother's house to watch. Usually, every weekend was spent with our grandparents. Once in a while, they would take us out for ice cream, or we would go over to their friends' house while they baked together. Our grandparents were, and still are, very important to us, and they have always dropped something on the dot to help us.

In spite of our grandparents' example, Tiffany and I sometimes spent too much time competing with each other about asinine things, like who could swim faster, or who could win at the board game Monopoly. We would say things like, "You're going

down, and I won't give up until I beat you." We were both very stubborn. At the end of whatever we were competing for, neither one of us would say, "Nice work," or "Good job." I guess you could say my sister molded me into the competitive person I am today.

Despite all the time we spent together competing or arguing, she actually also rubbed off on me in a positive way. Growing up, she had all of her priorities straight and she was always doing the right thing, so now I have taken on some of her positive qualities. She was the type of person that would go over her homework at least six times before passing it in, and she would study three hours for every test. I always pass my homework in on time, and I ask for help when I need it.

The time we spent together in our room after school was always "Homework Time," in her words. She sat down with me until we had both finished all of our work. If it weren't for my sister, I would probably give up on things more easily and not always try my hardest. By watching the way she did things, I gained knowledge and incentive that I use in all my work. There are no more of those nights where I just go to sleep instead of staying up to finish an essay that is due the next day. She acted like a second mother to me, always pushing me in the right direction when I needed it most.

Now that we are in two different colleges, I miss her and how she was always around. Things have changed dramatically. It was better before when we were together in our one little bedroom, with our nightly board games. Once in a while, I'll get an instant message from her on the computer saying, "Are you getting all your school work done?" Those words give me a feeling of comfort, and it is a relief to know that she still cares and is looking out for her younger sister.

Sometimes change is for the better. But sometimes it is not. I get lonely once in a while when I think of how things used to be. The thought of my sister and me being in the same room, sharing our stories of what happened that day, gives me a feeling of comfort. We may not be able to fight about that last chocolate chip cookie, but we always stay in touch one way or another. We even like to bear pain together. For the past three summers, we have gotten tattoos together. It started when I was sixteen years old and she was eighteen. One night, we decided to get tattoos, and we have done it for three summers since then. Although that

might not be the same as watching a movie with our grandparents, it still counts. With change comes sacrifice. Although we don't live in the same room or, for that matter, the same city, we find ways to be together, to reminisce about the past and talk about our problems today.

Sometime you have to go with the punches life throws you. My sister and I have been close since the time I was born, and we are not used to being in different cities, but that does not mean we have grown apart. Even though I don't always like the new way better, I have to learn to adapt to it. As time goes on, I realize that my sister and I both have our own lives to live, and as we get older, we are going to start doing our own thing more and more. College is just a taste of the separation we are yet to experience. One day, she will be married with her own kids, and I hope I will too, but that doesn't mean we won't make time for each other. It just seems different because Tiffany is not there to tell me to turn down the television at night. My point is that I don't necessarily like this new way of living, but in time I will have to get used to the fact that Tiffany will not always be around to argue with me about the last cookie.



The Pen

By Mike Arienti

I have lost
the pen
with which I wrote you
a poem

and which
you asked me to
please
return.

I'm sorry for losing it.
I will leave myself a note
to buy another.
May I borrow a pen?

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